DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 376 711 FL 022 577

AUTHOR Jourdenais, Renee
TITLE Academic Library Skills for the ESL Student.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (28th, Baltimore, MD, March 8-12, 1994).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; Computer Literacy; *Course Descriptions; *English (Second Language); Foreign Students; Higher Education; *Library Instruction; *Library Skills; Reading Instruction; Reading Writing Relationship; *Research Papers (Students); *Research Skills; Student Attitudes; Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a syllabus for an academic library skills course for college-level English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) students developed by an instructor of reading and writing in an intensive English program for upper level ESL students in a large state university. At the culmination of the 15-week program, each student was required to complete an original research paper; yet little in the way of independent research was demanded and little training in the relevant methodologies was provided. The purpose of the syllabus was to remedy this situation by incorporating more library time into the program and by providing students with hands-on library experience. The syllabus was tried out in a 10-week summer session. A 1-page, 4-column outline showing the progression of the course from week 1 through week 8 (the last two weeks had no library component) under the headings "Week," "Reading," "Writing," and "Library" is given, followed by a page of amplification on each week's activities. The paper includes two sets of student comments, the first concerning their reactions to North American university libraries in general, and the second concerning their perceptions of the benefits to be derived from the library skills program. An appeal to all teachers to instruct students in the use of the library concludes the paper. (LR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 376 711

Renée Jourdenais

TESOL 1994

ACADEMIC LIBRARY SKILLS FOR THE ESL STUDENT

Goal: To provide ESL students with the necessary library skills for future academic pursuits in United States universities. Including such skills as the following:

- the ability to focus and research a topic
- knowledge of library terminology
- the ability to use various library resources
- the ability to use library on-line terminals

Methods: Meaningful, hands-on experience using academic libraries provided in the context of a reading/writing course.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Renee Jourdenais
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

FL022577

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Background:

I taught reading and writing in the upper levels (4 & 5) of an intensive English program at a large state university for five semesters. During these semesters, I developed this syllabus -- essentially through trial and error -- trying to incorporate more library time into each semester.

The students in Level 5 (most of whom were interested in pursuing further studies in the United States) were required to complete a research paper by the end of the semester. The texts we used, which varied semester by semester, included instruction for this type of task -- to the point of actually providing articles for the students to incorporate into a "research" paper.

As a graduate student myself at the time, I felt I would be doing a disservice to my students if I did not require them to actually do the research themselves. (Additionally, I found the "technology" topic provided by the text somewhat boring, and really wasn't interested in reading 15 papers on the subject!) I also knew, from experience, that the most difficult part of doing a research paper was doing the library research -- and had spent many, many hours in the library myself, hunting down information. I wanted my students to fully understand what was involved in research work.

So I introduced them to a university library.

Libraries have recognized the need to provide hands-on library experience to students, finding that general tours of the

library just aren't giving students the abilities they need to survive in the academic world. In Library Journal (November 15, 1992), Paula Kaufman emphasizes the importance of libraries in information competency instruction. She states that students need the ability "to identify what information is needed and to go about finding, getting, using, and managing the information" they need (38). And furthermore, that information competency "should be taught across many disciplines and integrated within the context of subject-oriented courses" (39).

The Library Instruction Committee established at the University of Florida, surveyed the University's students, and found that only 20% of the students felt that they could use the library system "very well." The Committee thereupon recommended:

- A systematic program of library instruction
- Instruction integrated with academic courses, with extensive use of hands-on instruction.
- Library instruction required by the University.
- A library instruction program that is structured to reach students several times during their education at UF, at increasingly sophisticated levels.

When all this interest is being paid to native students' inabilities to function in university libraries, one can imagine the difficulties that non-native students are having in an environment as unfamiliar as that of the university library.

Although I had used the library personnel and services at my university library as a resource for my ESL class, I found that they tended to assume a uniform understanding of what a "library" was and general knowledge of library terminology. My students, from a variety of countries, had no such uniform knowledge nor the necessary terminology needed to understand the presentations the library provided.

My ESL students found American university libraries quite different from those in their own countries. Of course, the magnitude of the difference depended upon where they were from:

"American libraries have more information about everything."

-- Turkey

"I was surprised at the amount of the books. The books at the library are so variable that I can find almost all of the topics that I want to read."

-- Korea

"I think that the biggest difference is the size of the library, ...and the amount of financial resources that they have to obtain books, magazines, and special editions... In Ecuador the libraries are not well organized, most times information is not computerized and it is not recent...They do not have services to ask for books from other libraries..."

-- Ecuador

"I am really impressed about the UF library. It is amazing how many things can be made with all the sources and facilities that are available for all the students. In my country, we have to

spend a long time just trying to get the most recent information, which might be some years old anyway."

-- Venezuela

"I had a very good surprise because I didn't expect that it could be so organized and big. Most importantly, I think that this library has all kinds of information that a person needs to help in her studies and acquire knowledge."

-- Columbia

"Here people can find books easier than in my country, because everyone has the opportunity to use the computers to look for books and it is easy to use. In general we use a card system to search for books. It is, of course, more difficult...."

-- Turkey

I worked the library instruction for my class into a reading/writing syllabus. The syllabus I will be discussing here is based on a 10-week summer session. Classes met 5 days a week, 2 hours a day, with 2 days each week in a computer/writing lab. (The regular semester was 15 weeks long, and classes met 4 days a week).

NOTE: This syllabus only gives you a BRIEF overview of what was happening as far as reading/writing were concerned. The focus of this presentation is on the **library instruction**.

Week	Reading	Writing	Library
1	Reading Process Skimming Scanning	Writing Process Computer Lab Pre-writing First Draft Rewrite	•Library use
2	Peer-edit Guided reading		•Library tour
3	Worksheets Thesis development	Comparison/ Contrast Thesis/ Outline Rough Draft Rewrite	•Reserve reading
4	Peer-edit Argument structure		•Use outside article to support argument
5	Articles	Critical Response Summaries Quotations/ Paraphrase	•Intro: *Library of Congress Subject Headings* •Intro Computer searching •Look for articles
6	Peer-edit	Thesis/ Outline Rough Draft Rewrite	
7	Plagiarism	Research Paper format Journal: Research Ideas	•Use *Subject Headings* to narrow topic •Keyword Search •Look for articles
8	Research Worksheets	Summaries	•Look for articles
9		Thesis/ Outline Rough Draft	
10		Final Paper Citations Bibliography	

Week 1: Introduction -- Library Use

Journal: "What experiences have you had with libraries in your country? Do you use the library frequently? How often and for what purpose? Describe a typical library visit."

Week 2: Library tour (1 hour)

Handouts: Library Terminology, Maps (library locations on campus), Floor plans, Library Hours

Tour: Reference, Circulation, Stacks, Call Numbers, Periodicals, Microfilm, Copy machines/cards, Reserve Desk

Apply for library cards

Journal: "From what you saw on our visit to the library, how are the libraries here similar or different to libraries in your country? Were there any things that surprised you? What were they? What other things would you like to learn about the university library?"

Week 3: Reserve Reading

Review how to use reserve readings
Provide with title of text
Give reading worksheet

Week 5: Argument Support

Introduce to *Library of Congress Subject Headings* index
Locate topics
Introduce to library computer terminals (2 hours)
Locate journals and books
Visit library to find articles (2 hours)

Week 7: Research Paper

Use *Subject Headings* to narrow topic and find keywords
Explain keyword searching
Search for articles on computers (2 hours)
Visit library to find articles (3 hours)

Week 8:

Continue search for articles -- if necessary

Journal: "How is your library search going? Are you having any difficulties finding your articles or using the library? Is there anything I can help you with or any questions that I can answer for you about the library?"

Comments:

I had the advantage of being familiar with the library and its resources. My students had the advantage of consistent instruction and a **meaningful** reason for using the library. Additionally, I knew what the students knew -- and what I needed them to know. And, I was in the library for the searching process, and could anticipate and field some of their problems and questions.

This syllabus requires a lot of preparation on the teacher's part and does take time. It's also sometimes frustrating for the students, as they learn that researching a topic isn't always easy! But it's worth it!

Here are some of the things student's had to say about their library experiences:

"My visit to the library was a big and nice surprise. First, I didn't know how much information from my first visit I had forgotten. Second, in my second visit I acquired a lot of new information."

"Now I feel better about the library, even though it gave me a little bit of a hard time."

"Now, I can feel more comfortable going and searching for information in the library. So it was very useful for me."

"This experience was very great."

"I enjoy using the library now that I know it. The library not only supplies me with a place to study, but also with a lot of information."

"I didn't know how to use the library....I have been in the library about 20 times, but I just studied...now I know how to borrow books, how to use the computer, and how to find the books in the library. These things are very helpful to me."

"Thank you for giving us the possibility to know how to use American libraries, because they are so different from [what] I used before and this system is not very comfortable when you don't know how to use it. The information on how to use the library which you gave us will make it easier!"

Conclusion:

PLEASE make use of your library's personnel and handouts -- just be aware that you may need to adapt materials and presentations to fit the level and knowledge of your students.

And PLEASE teach your students to use the library -- as a graduate student, I certainly spent a large portion of my time hunting for journals and doing research. As graduate students in American universities, they will too!